DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 146 984 JC 770 569

AUTHOR	DeBord, Larry W.; Williams, Max W.
TITLE	A Profile of Demographic Characteristics, Occupational and Educational Plans of Vocational Students in Selected Mississippi Junior Colleges.
INSTITUTION	Mississippi Univ., University. Inst. of Urban Research.
SPONS AGENCY	Mississippi Research and Development Center, Jackson.
PUB DATE	Aug 76
NOTE	24p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Academic Aspiration; Blacks; Career Choice; Caucasians; Educational Research; Family Income; *Junior Colleges; Males; Occupational Aspiration; Participant Satisfaction; *Racial Differences; Socioeconomic Background; Student Attitudes; Student Characteristics; Surveys; *Vocational Education; Vocational Interests; Vocational Schools; *Vocational Training Centers
IDENTIFIERS	Mississippi

ABSTRACT

A survey was conducted in spring 1975 of 929 full-time male students enrolled in eight of 20 postsecondary vocational centers in Mississippi. Representing 20% of the total state center enrollment, the sample was 35% black and 65% white, with black representation comparable to the population in the geographic areas studied. Findings included the following: (1) auto mechanics, welding, air-conditioning, electrical occupations, and machine shop accounted for 63% of program majors; (2) 19% of students' fathers and 29% of mothers were high school graduates; (3) 69% expected to achieve education beyond vocational training; (4) 48% decided to enter vocational training while in high school; (5) 46% reported no one influenced their educational decision; (6) 92% were satisfied with their programs; (7) 74% would choose to work in Mississippi if given an opportunity to do so; and (8) 76% of blacks and 46% of whites came from homes with family incomes under $5,000. Racial differences indicated a higher proportion of blacks (64% vs. 37%) made their vocational education decision while in high school, and they maintain higher total educational expectations, with 53.9% of black students expecting to receive university and/or graduate degrees compared to 32.3% of white students. (Author/RT)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED146984

A Profile of Demographic Characteristics, Occupational and Educational Plans of Vocational Students in Selected Mississippi Junior Colleges

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Larry W. DeBord

Max W. Williams

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

JC 770 569

The Institute of Urban Research
and
The Department of Sociology and Anthropology
The University of Mississippi

A Profile of Demographic Characteristics, Occupational and Educational Plans of Vocational Students in Selected Mississippi Junior Colleges

Larry W. DeBord, Ph.D.

Max W. Williams, Ph.D.

The Institute of Urban Research

and

The Department of Sociology and Anthropology

The University of Mississippi

The research funding the basis for this report was supported in part by a grant from The Mississippi Research and Development Center

Jackson, Mississippi

August, 1976

Table of Contents

		Page
Abstract of Findings		iii
INTRODUCTION		1
STUDY DESIGN		3
FINDINGS		10
RACIAL DIFFERENCES		17
Exhibit		
1	State Map Showing the Predominantly Post-Secondary Area Schools and the District Served by Each	4
Tables		
1	Enrollment in Post-Secondary Trades and Industry Programs by School and Program - 1974-1975	5
2	Sample Distribution by Race and Center	6
3	Sample Distribution by Race and Program	7
3A	Distribution of Students by Training Program in Eight Sample Schools by Race	8
4	Family Background Characteristics	11
5	Characteristics of Students	12
6	Evaluation of Vocational Training	15
7	Students Without Jobs Waiting for Them Who Would Choose to Work in Mississippi or Another State by Race	15
8	Students Without Jobs Waiting for Them Given Two Equally Attractive Job Choices Who Would Choose to Work in Mississippi or Another State by Race	16
8A	Students Without Jobs Waiting for Them Given Two Job Choices Not Equally Attractive Who Would Choose to Work in Mississippi or Another State by Race	16
9	Students Without Jobs Waiting for Them Given Two Equally Attractive Job Choices Who Would Choose to Work in Their Home County or Away from Their Home County by Race	16
9A	Students Without Jobs Waiting for Them Given Two Job Choices Not Equally Attractive Who Would Choose to Work in Their Home County or Away from Their Home County by Race	16

Abstract of Findings

1. For the year ending June 30, 1975, vocational education enrollments in Mississippi totalled 175,561 students.

2. By far the most popular program areas in the sample were auto mechanics, welding, air-conditioning/refrigeration, electrical occupations and machine shop. These five areas enroll 63% of the total number of vocational students in the sample.

3. Nineteen percent (19%) of the students' fathers and 29% of the students' mothers were high school graduates; 86% of the students were high school graduates or had their GED equivalents.

4. Sixty-nine percent (69%) of the students state that they expect some education beyond their vocational program.

5. Forty-eight percent (48%) of the students made their decision to enter vocational training while in high school.

6. Forty-six percent (46%) of the students said "no one" influenced their decision to enter vocational training; 5% said teachers or counselors influenced their decision.

7. Ninety-two percent (92%) of the students are satisfied with their programs and rate their programs from good to excellent.

8. Seventy-four percent (74%) of blacks and whites say that they would choose to work in Mississippi if given an opportunity to do so.

9. Seventy-six percent (76%) of blacks and 46% of whites are from homes with incomes under $5,000.

10. Sixty-four percent (64%) of blacks and 37% of whites made their decision for vocational training while in high school.

INTRODUCTION

In the past ten years, an expanded emphasis has been placed upon the importance of public vocational programs in maintaining a continuous labor supply in our complex industrial society. This increased emphasis is documented by the tremendous growth in enrollment of 659% in these programs during the period from 1965 to 1974. This enrollment represents an increase which is six times that for the traditional academic sector according to the U. S. Office of Education. That these trends should continue into the future is also well documented. USOE reports that there is a good chance that by 1980 60% of students attending community colleges will be enrolled in occupational programs

In Mississippi, the growth of vocational programs has paralleled trends at the national level. The State Department of Education reports that for the year ending June 30, 1975, vocational education enrollments reached a record total of 175,561 students. Even excluding industrial arts students who were included in this total for the first time in 1975, there was an increase of 19,103 students over the previous year. Of the total students enrolled, 106,057 (60%) were secondary, 12,114 (7%) were post-secondary, and 57,390 (33%) were in adult programs. By racial breakdowns, 71,851 (41%) of the students were black, 103,032 (59%) were white, and 678 (less than 1%) were other races.

While these statistics might be encouraging to educators in vocational programs, they suggest that considerable demand will be placed upon the nation and certain states in particular to provide industrial jobs for the increased number of graduates of vocational programs. It is to this general end that our research lends itself.

Our research goals were two-fold. First, we wanted to gather data which could help to evaluate job goals and aspirations of vocational students such as in which geographic area of the state they would like to work after they complete their program, what were their salary expectations, and how they evaluated their programs in terms of possibly meeting their desired occupational goals. We feel that these data can provide valuable input to vocational-technical directors and coordinators to assist them in curriculum development, needed program changes, career guidance for prospective students, etc. These data can also help to provide a useful skill level inventory for industries interested in expanding or relocating in Mississippi. Specifically these

data can serve as a linking mechanism between students desiring to work in a particular area and a potential industry interested in locating in that area.

The second goal of our research is rather long-range. Not only will our research serve useful purposes at this particular time, but it will also provide a data base for future study of a vocational student cohort. Our sample can be used for a longitudinal study of job expectations of students and subsequent realization of their expectations. We can easily use this sample in two or three years to see how many of the students are satisfied with their jobs and, if they are not, we could ascertain the reasons for their dissatisfaction. This information can be very helpful to various state agencies which are concerned with keeping our skilled labor force in Mississippi.

STUDY DESIGN

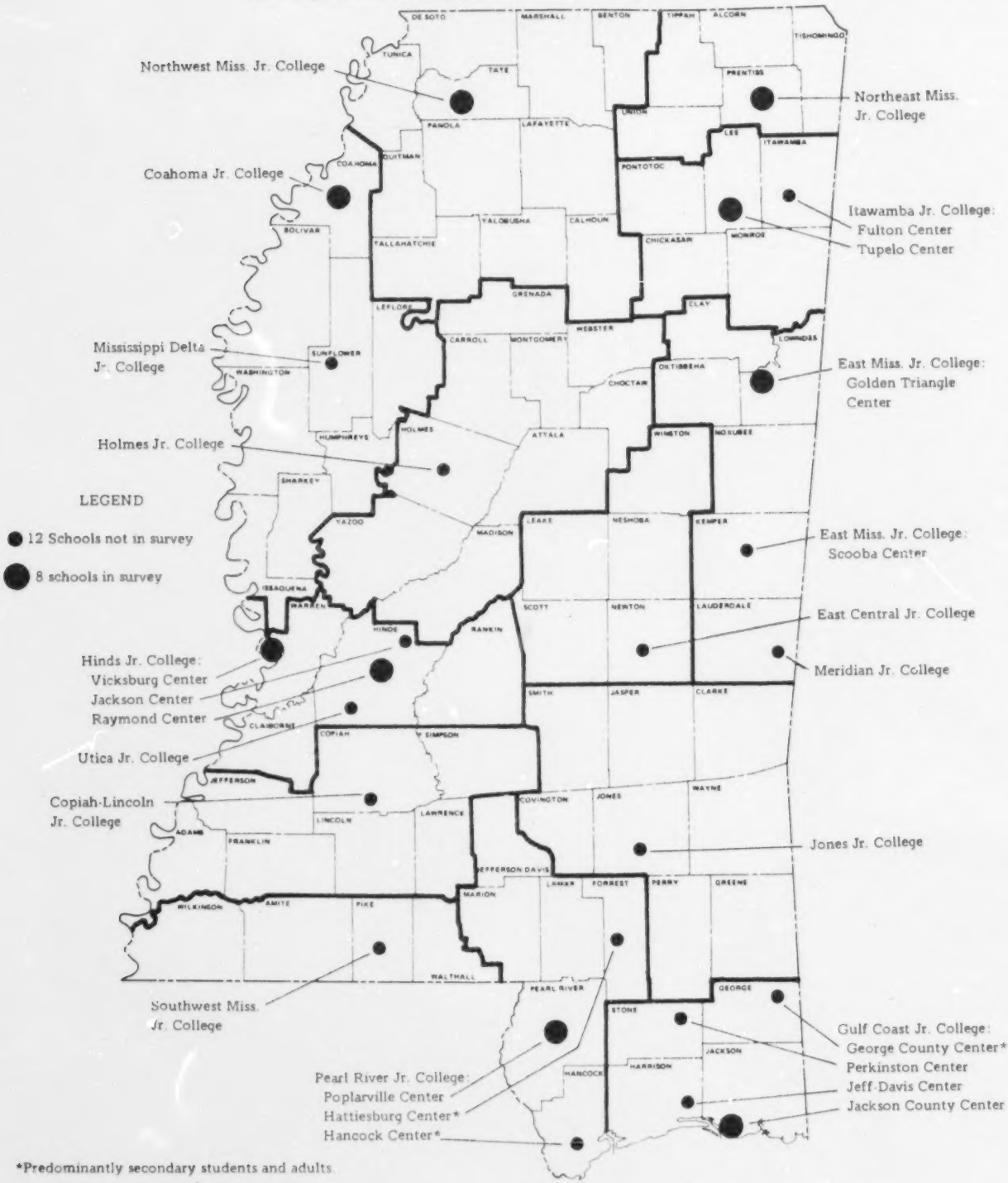
To meet the aims of this study, a survey of 929 full-time male students enrolled in industrial and construction trades programs at eight post-secondary vocational centers was conducted in the spring of 1975. The centers were selected predominantly on the basis of their geographical location to give a state-wide representation of post-secondary vocational education. All of the centers are affiliated with junior colleges. (See Exhibit 1) These eight centers enrolled 59% (2,681 students) of the 4,567 students enrolled in trades and industry programs in the 20 state centers during the 1974-1975 fiscal year. (See Table 1) Also, the 901 students in the survey who reported program area (Table 1) represent 34% of the students in the eight centers and 20% of the total number of students enrolled at all 20 state centers.

Consequently, in spite of the difficulties usually encountered in identifying the exact population enrolled in vocational programs at any one time due to open enrollment policies, variation in program completion time, etc., the procedure adopted for this survey appears to have accomplished (as nearly as possible) a population survey in the sample of schools selected. The number of respondents in programs surveyed (34% of total reported enrolled during the academic year in those programs) looks very good when compared with the follow-up data on program completions reported by the State Department of Education. These comparisons suggest that the analysis reported here is probably based upon the most extensive data gathered on the most representative sample of vocational students to date. It provides an excellent base for careful follow-up study.

The sample distribution of the 929 students by race, center, and program area are presented in Table 2, Table 3, and Table 3A. The findings presented in Table 2 show that 35% of the total sample is black and 65% is white. The range in racial composition of the eight centers is from 0% white (100% black) at Coahoma JC to 88% white at Northeast JC. Of the 329 blacks in the sample the highest percentage (25%) attend Hinds JC and the lowest percentage (5%) attend Gulf Coast JC. Among the 600 whites, the highest percentage (27%) attend Itawamba JC - Tupelo Campus and the lowest percentage (0%) attend Coahoma JC.

Table 3 and Table 3A present a summary of findings by race and program area. Twenty program areas are included in the sample (Table 3) and of these 20 program areas, 86% of the students were enrolled in the ten largest program

Exhibit 1: STATE MAP SHOWING THE PREDOMINANTLY POST-SECONDARY AREA SCHOOLS AND THE DISTRICT SERVED BY EACH



*Predominantly secondary students and adults.

NOTE: One additional post secondary school is operated at the state prison at Parchman, but it is independent of any junior college.

SOURCE: State Department of Education.

Table 1: Enrollment in Post-Secondary Trades and Industry Programs by School and Program – 1974–1975

Training Program	Survey N	% OF TOTAL ENROLLMENT	Schools in Survey N = 8									Schools Not in Survey N = 12													
			HINDS-RAYMOND	GULF COAST-JACKSON CO.	TUPELO	GOLDEN TRIANGLE	PEARL RIVER	NORTHEAST	NORTHWEST	COAHOMA	Sample Total By Program	COPIAH-LINCOLN CO.	GULF COAST-GEORGE CO.	GULF COAST-JEFF DAVIS CO.	HINDS-JACKSON	HOLMES-LEXINGTON	JONES	EAST MS-SCOOBA	MERIDIAN	EAST CENTRAL	SOUTHWEST	GULF COAST-PERKINSTON	MS DELTA	Non Sampl. Total	State Total
Air Conditioning	110	39	82		77	21	27	20	52		279	29	13	50		24	60		23	24	25		40	288	567
Air Craft Maintenance	5	12	24			17					41													0	41
Auto Service – Other											0						32			77				109	109
Barbering			56								56													0	56
Body and Fender	53	29	55		31			68		31	185						68							68	253
Business Machine Maint	10	50	20								20													0	20
Carpentry	52	56	35				26			31	92		12	39										51	143
Commercial Art – Occ			42								42													0	42
Communications											0			21										21	21
Construction Maint.								26			26		34	59							35			128	154
Cosmetology							34	15	25		74	35				12				39	20			106	180
Diesel Mechanics	25	21	55			18	18	29			120													0	120
Drafting			63								63				25									25	88
Electrical Occ	106	60	83				62	31			176			27		24				35				86	262
Electronic Occ											0									24				24	24
Heavy Equipment (Const. and Oper.)						23					23	39	14											50	73
Industrial Electrician				33	73	21					127			9					15		35		17	76	203
Machine Shop	96	38	89	25	44	21	28	43			250	36				10	23		9	19	19		33	149	399
Masonry	35	36	53				19			30	102			25										25	127
Mechanics	136	52	89	31	56		32		28	26	262	42			26	43		20			46	16	21	216	478
Motor Repair	11	39	28								28													0	28
Plumbing/Pipefitting	18	58		31							31			28										28	59
Printing	21	31	43		25						68											18	15	33	101
Radio and TV	35	26	97					19	20		136						42						16	58	194
Sheet Metal	16	29	25	31							56			26									19	45	101
Textile Prod. and Fab.	12	80				15					15													0	15
Tool and Die	15	48						4	27		31													0	31
Trade and Ind. Occ											0												24	24	24
Upholstering	8	53			15						15													0	15
Watchmaking/Repair	7	18							13	25	38						46							46	84
Welding and Cutting	128	39	64	68	52	19	29	27	33	33	325	30	17			30	44			37	31	21	20	230	555
SCHOOL TOTAL	901	34	1,003	219	373	155	275	282	198	176	2,681	203	90	284	53	143	315	20	47	255	211	55	205	1,886	4,567

SOURCE: State Department of Education.

Table 2: Sample Distribution by Race and Center

Center	Black N	Black %	White N	White %	Row Total N	Row Total %
Northwest Miss. Jr. College	49	45.4	59	54.6	108	100
Column %	14.9		9.8		11.7	
Coahoma Jr. College	58	100	0	0.0	58	100
Column %	17.6		0.0		6.2	
Northeast Miss. Jr. College	16	11.7	121	88.3	137	100
Column %	4.9		20.2		14.7	
Itawamba Jr. College Tupelo Campus	49	23.1	163	76.9	212	100
Column %	14.9		27.2		22.8	
East Miss. Jr. College Golden Triangle Center	39	43.8	50	56.2	89	100
Column %	11.9		8.3		9.6	
Hinds Jr. College Raymond Center	81	41.5	114	58.5	195	100
Column %	24.6		19.0		21.0	
Pearl River Jr. College Poplarville Center	22	36.1	39	63.9	61	100
Column %	6.7		6.5		6.6	
Gulf Coast Jr. College Jackson County Center	15	21.7	54	78.3	69	100
Column %	4.6		9.0		7.4	
Column Total	329	35.4	600	64.6	929	100
Column %	100.0		100.0		100.0	

Table 3. Sample Distribution by Race and Program*

Program	Black N	Black %	White N	White %	Total N	Total %
Air Conditioning	32	29.1	78	70.9	110	100
Column %	10.2		13.3		12.2	
Aircraft Maintenance	0	0.0	5	100.0	5	100
Column %	0.0		0.9		0.6	
Body and Fender	31	58.5	22	41.5	53	100
Column %	9.8		3.8		5.9	
Business Machine Maintenance	6	60.0	4	40.0	10	100
Column %	1.9		0.7		1.1	
Carpentry	14	26.9	38	73.1	52	100
Column %	4.4		6.5		5.8	
Diesel Mechanics	7	28.0	18	72.0	25	100
Column %	2.2		3.1		2.8	
Electrical Occupations	17	16.0	89	84.0	106	100
Column %	5.4		15.2		11.8	
Machine Shop	37	38.5	59	61.5	96	100
Column %	11.7		10.1		10.7	
Masonry	24	64.9	13	35.1	37	100
Column %	7.6		2.2		4.1	
Mechanics (auto)	45	33.1	91	66.9	136	100
Column %	14.3		15.5		15.1	
Electric Motor Repair	6	54.5	5	45.5	11	100
Column %	1.9		0.9		1.2	
Plumbing/Pipelines	3	16.7	15	83.3	18	100
Column %	1.0		2.6		2.0	
Printing	9	42.9	12	57.1	21	100
Column %	2.9		2.0		2.3	
Radio and TV	5	14.3	30	85.7	35	100
Column %	1.6		5.1		3.9	
Sheet Metal	11	68.8	5	31.3	16	100
Column %	3.5		0.9		1.8	
Textile Prod. and Fab.	7	58.3	5	41.7	12	100
Column %	2.2		0.9		1.3	
Tool and Die	5	33.3	10	66.7	15	100
Column %	1.6		1.7		1.7	
Upholstering	4	50.0	4	50.0	8	100
Column %	1.3		0.7		0.9	
Watchmaking/Repair	3	42.9	4	57.1	7	100
Column %	1.0		0.7		0.8	
Welding/Cutting	49	38.3	79	61.7	128	100
Column %	15.6		13.5		14.2	
TOTAL	315	35.0	586	65.0	901	100
Column %	100.0		100.0		100.0	

*Not all tables will sum to a total of 929 students because some students did not respond to all questionnaire items.

Table 3A: Distribution of Students by Training Program in Eight Sample Schools by Race
(23 Programs Included – Ten Largest Programs)

Training Program	TOTAL SAMPLE N = 910				BLACKS N = 317				WHITES N = 593				TOTAL INSTATE N = 4,567			
	Rank	No.	% of Total	Number of Schools Offered	Rank	No.	% of Total Program	% of Blacks	Rank	No.	% of Total Program	% of Whites	Number of Programs In State	Rank	No.	% of Total Enrollment
Auto Mechanics	1	136	15	7	2	45	33	14	1	91	67	15	17	3	478	10
Welding	2	128	14	8	1	49	38	16	3	79	62	13	16	2	555	12
A/C Refrigeration	3	110	12	6	4	32	29	10	4	78	71	13	15	1	567	12
Electrical	4	106	12	6	7	17	16	5	2	89	84	15	12		489	11
Machine Shop	5	96	10	7	3	37	38	12	5	59	62	10	15	4	399	9
Body/Fender	6	53	6	4	5	31	58	10	8	22	42	4	6	6	253	6
Carpentry	7	52	6	2	8	14	27	4	6	38	73	6	5	11	143	3
Brick Masonry	8	37	4	2	6	24	65	8	10	13	35	2	3	12	127	3
Radio/TV	9	35	4	3	15	5	14	2	7	30	86	5	7	8	194	4
Diesel Mechanics	10	25	3	4	11	7	28	2	9	18	72	3	4	13	120	3
TOTALS		778	86			261	29	83		517	57	87	100		3,325	73%

areas presented in Table 3A. By far, the most popular areas of the ten largest program areas for the total sample are auto mechanics, welding, air-conditioning/ refrigeration, electrical occupations, and machine shop. These five program areas enroll 63% of the total number of vocational students. They also rank as the top five program areas for the white subsample and four rank among the top five program areas for blacks. Body and fender repair and brick masonry rank above electrical occupations in popularity among blacks. It is also shown in Table 3A that these five program areas account for 54% of the total enrollment (4,567) in the entire state and the ten largest program areas enroll 73% of the state total. These percentages are striking when one considers that there were 31 post-secondary trades and industry program areas being offered in the state during fiscal 1974-75.

FINDINGS

As we have stated earlier, the practical goals of this phase of our research focus specifically upon the job goals and aspirations of those students enrolled in the program and the future industrial development needs of the state. Consequently, the findings presented here relate to the backgrounds and characteristics of the students, and their program effectiveness evaluations, as well as their interest in employment in the state upon completion of their program. We feel that these data can serve to develop more realistic counseling programs at the vocational centers. At the same time, these data can provide industrial planners with needed information on work choice aspirations. For example, our data indicate that the students in our sample have a strong desire to work in Mississippi (Table 8) and in their home county if given an opportunity to do so. If a student is seeking career counseling, a counselor with general knowledge of specific vocational skill needs in a geographic area could direct students in programs needed to fill these needs. Also, the work choice data presented can indicate to potential industries that the labor force is generally willing to stay in a particular area if they will locate in that area.

Tables 4 and 5 present our findings on the backgrounds and characteristics of students enrolled in all 20 program areas. The general pattern which emerges from an examination of these tables suggests a considerable contrast between the achievement potential of the students and their families on various dimensions of socioeconomic status. Our data specifically document the potential for a high level of intergenerational occupational mobility between the student and his family. For example, whereas 19% of the students' fathers and 29% of the students' mothers were high school graduates, 86% of the students surveyed either were high school graduates or had their GED equivalent. Also, when one considers that all of the students are enrolled in programs representing skilled occupation groups, (only 14% of their fathers were in this category) their potential for better jobs than their fathers is dramatic. This finding is one of the most significant in this study from an economic development viewpoint. It documents the tremendous growth in educational achievement of a large proportion of the population of Mississippi which in the past had been forced to work in labor-intensive unskilled jobs.

Our data also suggest that skill acquisition in itself may not be the ultimate educational objective of a large proportion of the sample. Sixty-nine

Table 4: Family Background Characteristics

	Black		White		Total	
Family Income:	N	%	N	%	N	%
Under $3,000	144	47.8	114	22.1	258	31.6
$3,000-$4,999	86	28.6	125	24.2	211	25.8
$5,000-$7,999	45	15.0	109	21.1	154	18.8
$8,000-$9,999	14	4.7	60	11.6	74	9.1
$10,000-$14,999	6	2.0	67	13.0	73	8.9
$15,000+	6	2.0	41	7.9	47	5.8
	301		516		817	
Father's Occupation:						
Unskilled	153	69.2	239	50.6	392	56.6
Semiskilled	49	22.2	112	23.7	161	23.2
Skilled	16	7.2	84	17.8	100	14.4
Professional-Technical	3	1.4	37	7.8	40	5.8
	221		472		693	
Father's Education:						
No Formal Training	24	8.1	18	3.3	42	5.0
Elementary School	132	44.4	193	35.4	325	38.6
Some High School	74	24.9	106	19.4	180	21.4
High School Graduate	43	14.5	114	20.9	157	18.6
Voc-Tec School	13	4.4	28	5.1	41	4.9
Some College	4	1.3	33	6.1	37	4.4
Finished College	5	1.7	40	7.3	45	5.3
Graduate Study	2	.7	13	2.4	15	1.8
	297		545		842	
Mother's Education:						
No Formal Training	4	1.4	11	2.1	15	1.8
Elementary School	99	34.0	128	23.9	227	27.5
Some High School	100	34.4	139	26.0	239	28.9
High School Graduate	55	18.9	185	34.6	240	29.1
Voc-Tec School	3	1.0	10	1.9	13	1.6
Some College	13	4.5	29	5.4	42	5.1
Finished College	13	4.5	27	5.0	40	4.8
Graduate Study	4	1.4	6	1.1	10	1.2
	291		535		826	

Table 5: Characteristics of Students

	Black		White		Total	
Age:	N	%	N	%	N	%
20 years or less	127	43.3	198	36.9	325	39.2
21 years - 29 years	121	41.3	160	29.8	281	33.9
30 years - 39 years	32	10.9	81	15.1	113	13.6
40 years+	13	4.4	98	18.2	111	13.4
	293		537		830	
High School Graduate:						
Yes	247	75.5	346	58.2	593	64.4
GED Equivalent	51	15.6	145	24.4	196	21.3
No	29	8.9	103	17.3	132	14.3
	327		594		921	
Presently Employed:						
No	221	71.8	378	63.4	599	66.3
Yes	87	28.2	218	36.6	305	33.7
	308		596		904	
Current Income:						
$5,000 or less	79	59.8	163	46.6	242	50.2
$5,001 - $10,000	42	31.8	146	41.7	188	39.0
$10,000+	11	8.4	41	11.7	52	10.7
	132		350		482	
Education Plans in H.S.:						
None Beyond H.S.	40	13.0	100	17.8	140	16.0
Undecided	76	24.5	253	44.9	329	37.7
Junior College	90	29.0	141	25.0	231	26.5
College or University	104	33.6	69	12.3	173	19.8
	210		563		873	
Total Education Expected:						
None Beyond Vocational	31	20.1	93	37.6	128	30.8
Jr. College Degree	40	26.0	74	30.0	114	28.4
University Degree	58	37.7	48	19.4	106	26.4
Other Advanced Degree	25	16.2	32	12.9	57	14.2
	154		247		401	
Decision to Enter Vocational Training:						
In High School	182	64.0	166	37.2	348	47.6
In Military	24	8.5	44	9.8	68	9.3
Other	78	27.5	237	53.0	315	43.1
	284		447		731	

percent of the students state that they expect some education beyond their vocational program. This finding, when considered from a practical viewpoint, documents the need for increased emphasis on career counseling of these students throughout the program. While some might realistically expect a junior college degree, university degree, or other advanced degree, (69% state such a desire) others might need to be directed to job training programs where they can fulfill occupational goals. One other finding that should be noted here related to the students' education plans in high school. Although 38% of the students reported that their education plans in high school were "undecided," 48% eventually made their decision to enter vocational training while in high school. This documents even more the need for strong career analysis programs at all levels in the education process.

Table 6 presents data on sources of influence of students in the programs and their subsequent evaluations of these programs. These findings document even more dramatically that the counseling needs of these particular students as they pertain to specific program area choices are critical. This is illustrated by the finding that only 5% of the students state that teachers or counselors influenced their choice of program area. Furthermore, 46% say that "no one" influenced their decision to enter a particular program. The future job placement implications of this finding are very significant. Without adequate guidance of these students into programs providing employment opportunities in the state (or area of residence, if this is their aspiration), there is little likelihood that these students can find jobs. They either will be faced with the prospect of leaving the state or accepting some job which will not allow them to reach their full employment potential. In either case the state has lost a potentially valuable economic resource.

It is interesting to note from Table 6 that although influence sources vary considerably among the students, 92% of the students are satisfied with their programs, and rate their programs from good to excellent. These findings are consistent regardless of the race of the students.

One of the major demographic trends which has been evident in Mississippi over the past several decades has been the consistent loss of population due to out-migration from the state. This loss has been characteristic of both blacks and whites and has served to deplete the state of a significant proportion of its young educated population. One of the major concerns of this study was to determine whether this movement from the state could be considered to result primarily from the economic push of lack of employment opportunities or the

result of a significant desire to leave the state regardless of the level of opportunities. To evaluate the aspirations of vocational students relating to their possible desires to work in Mississippi, a series of questions was asked of respondents both with and without definite jobs waiting for them after they complete their programs. The results of these questions for students without jobs waiting for them are presented in Tables 7 through 9A.

The evidence presented in these tables suggests a consistent desire to work in Mississippi if a job is made available to the respondents. From Table 7 it can be observed that 74% of the respondents would choose to work in Mississippi if given the opportunity to do so. Even more significant is the racial breakdown on this question. For both blacks and whites the percentages are identical to the percentage for the total sample. In both subsamples 74% of the respondents would choose to work in Mississippi.

Tables 8 and 8A and Tables 9 and 9A indicate that even though there is a strong desire to work in Mississippi this desire is tempered to a considerable extent by whether equally attractive job choices are available in the state and in the respondents home county. Students were asked specifically to weigh working conditions and salary in their aspirations pertaining to preferred geographic area of work. When students were asked to select alternative geographic areas given equal working conditions, over 80% indicated they would select jobs in Mississippi over jobs in another state, and jobs in their home counties over jobs in counties away from home. (Tables 8 and 9) However, when better jobs away from Mississippi or their home counties were offered, the percentages dropped considerably to less than 50% who would stay in Mississippi or their home county for work opportunities. (Tables 9A and 10A)

Generally, these findings suggest that for this vocational sample at least, students regardless of race would like to stay in Mississippi if given attractive job opportunities. This information presents evidence contrary to the view held by many students of population distribution who stress the importance of "black or white flight" from Mississippi and other southern states based upon decisions independent of economic opportunities in the South.

Table 6: Evaluation of Vocational Training

Influence on Program Choice:	Black N	Black %	White N	White %	Total N	Total %
No one	125	39.2	290	49.3	415	45.8
Teacher/Counselor	33	10.3	16	2.7	49	5.4
Others	161	50.5	282	48.0	443	48.8
	319		588		907	
Feeling About Decision For Vocational Training:						
Satisfied	218	92.0	404	91.8	622	91.9
Mixed Feelings	12	5.1	21	4.8	33	4.9
Dissatisfied	7	3.0	15	3.4	22	3.2
	237		440		677	
Rating of Vocational Training Program:						
Very Poor	7	2.3	17	3.0	24	2.7
Weak	15	4.9	35	6.1	50	5.7
Good	161	52.8	244	42.8	405	46.3
Very Strong	58	19.0	124	21.8	182	20.8
Excellent	64	21.0	150	26.3	214	24.5
	305		570		875	

Table 7: Students Without Jobs Waiting for Them Who Would Choose to Work in Mississippi or Another State by Race

N = 702

State of Work Choice	Black N	Black %	White N	White %	Total N	Total %
Mississippi	190	73.6	327	73.6	517	73.6
Another State	68	26.4	117	26.4	185	26.4
Total	258	100.0	444	100.0	702	100.0

Table 8: Students Without Jobs Waiting for Them Given Two Equally Attractive Job Choices Who Would Choose to Work in Mississippi or Another State by Race

N = 767

State of Work Choice	Black N	Black %	White N	White %	Total N	Total %
Mississippi	190	73.6	327	73.6	517	73.6
Another State	68	26.4	117	26.4	185	26.4
Total	258	100.0	444	100.0	702	100.0

Table 8A: Students Without Jobs Waiting for Them Given Two Job Choices Not Equally Attractive Who Would Choose to Work in Mississippi or Another State by Race

N = 636

State of Work Choice	Black N	Black %	White N	White %	Total N	Total %
Mississippi	106	44.4	201	50.6	307	48.3
Another State	133	55.6	196	49.4	329	51.7
Total	239	100.0	397	100.0	636	100.0

Table 9: Students Without Jobs Waiting for Them Given Two Equally Attractive Job Choices Who Would Choose to Work in Their Home County or Away From Their Home County by Race

N = 712

County of Work Choice	Black N	Black %	White N	White %	Total N	Total %
Home County	226	82.2	377	86.3	603	84.7
Away From Home County	49	17.8	60	13.7	109	15.3
Total	275	100.0	437	100.0	712	100.0

Table 9A: Students Without Jobs Waiting for Them Given Two Job Choices Not Equally Attractive Who Would Choose to Work in Their Home County or Away From Their Home County by Race

N = 676

County of Work Choice	Black N	Black %	White N	White %	Total N	Total %
Home County	107	41.8	186	44.3	293	43.3
Away From Home County	149	58.2	234	55.7	383	56.7
Total	256	100.0	420	100.0	676	100.0

RACIAL DIFFERENCES

The pattern of racial differences on the variables studied above is especially interesting in view of studies of race differences in other institutional settings. Blacks are represented in our sample in approximately the same proportion as in the general population of the geographic regions studied. Although there is variation in representation across programs, all except one program (enrolling only five of the students of our sample) has a substantial black enrollment (from 14% to 69%).

Our data suggest that there are differences between blacks and whites in the sample in terms of the resources with which they enter vocational school. For instance, while 57% of the students in the study are from homes with incomes under $5,000, a disproportionate number of blacks are from such homes (76% vs. 46%). Beyond this, fewer blacks than whites report current personal family incomes over $5,000 (40% vs. 53%). It should be noted that racial differences in resources prior to entering vocational school and current resources are reduced considerably.

The data show that more blacks than whites aspired to higher education when in high school, and that larger percentages of black students made the decision for vocational training while in high school (64% vs. 37%). Also, the black students continue to maintain higher total educational expectations than do white students.

Despite the substantial differences between black and white students entering vocational training, the measures of current program involvement, program evaluations, and work expectations show no significant variations by race. These findings are very encouraging since they suggest that not only are vocational schools providing opportunities for upward mobility for students of unskilled working-class background, but they may also be reducing the racial gap between students served.

The central questions remaining revolve around the ability of black and white graduates of these programs to convert their gains into stable careers based on the skills learned. These questions will focus the second phase of our research.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

JAN 1 3 1978

CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGES